DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 703 CE 054 346

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Castin, Franz |
| TITLE | Employers' Organizations--Their Involvement in the Development of a European Vocational Training Policy. |
| INSTITUTION | European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Berlin (West Germany). |
| REPORT NO | ISBN-92-825-7201-3 |
| PUB DATE | 87 |
| NOTE | 121p.; For related documents, see CE 054 346-354. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | UNIPUB, 4661-F Assembly Drive, Lanham, MD 20706-4391 (Catalogue No. HX-48-87-387-EN-C, $5.00). |
| PUB TYPE | Reports - Research/Technical (143) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC05 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Advisory Committees; Continuing Education; *Educational Policy; *Employer Attitudes; Employment Practices; Foreign Countries; Industrial Training; Inservice Education; Institutional Cooperation; *Job Training; Labor Needs; Participation; *Participative Decision Making; *Policy Formation; Postsecondary Education; Professional Development; Secondary Education; Staff Development; *Vocational Education |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Europe |

ABSTRACT

This document presents an overview and synthesis of the involvement of employers' and employers' organizations in the development of vocational training policy in Europe. Material was gathered through the personal experience of the author and from interviews with those responsible for vocational training in various employers' professional organizations, universities, and government structures. The report is organized in three parts. The first part covers employers' involvement in community institutions of the European Community. Organizations profiled include the Standing Committee on Employment, the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training, the European Coal and Steel Community Consultative Committee, the European Social Fund, the Economic and Social Committee, the Tripartite Conferences, and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. Pat II examines the role of employers' participation in international institutions beyond the European Community: the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Labour Organization, the Council of Europe, and the Union of Industries of the European Community and the Employers' Liaison Committee. Part III looks at employers' participation in vocational training policy development in the various sectors of the economy, such as in agriculture, in metal industries, in the construction sector, and in the services sector. (KC)

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CEDEFOP Document

# Employers' organizations - their involvement in the development of a European vocational training policy

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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# Employers' organizations - their involvement in the development of a European vocational training policy

Study commissioned by Cedefop within the framework of the project 'The role of the social partners in vocational training'

Franz Castin
February 1987

First edition, Berlin 1987

Published by:

CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
Bundesallee 22, **D-1000 Berlin 15**
Tel. (030) 88 41 20, Telex 184 163 eucen d, Telefax (030) 88 41 2222

The Centre was established by Regulation (EEC) No 337/75 of the Council of the European Communities

This publication is also available in the following languages:

DE ISBN 92-7200-5
FR ISBN 92-7202-1

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1987

ISBN 92-825-7201-3

Catalogue number: HX-48-87-387-EN-C

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*Printed in Belgium*

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## INTRODUCTION

CEDEFOP has carried out a number of in-depth studies of the role played by the social partners in the organization of vocational training. Over and above the national studies undertaken in the twelve EC Member States, the aim was to assess the extent to which the social partners cooperated in training at **European** level.

This document is pitched **exclusively** at this level; moreover, it is seen more particularly from the position and stance of the **employers'** organizations. A second study has been undertaken from the position of the **trade union** organizations by a different author. This document is one of the two parts of a diptych. Vocational training is an area of little confict, conducive to cooperation between partners whose interests often converge here.

As far as Community social policy is concerned, the employers are often very reserved: they are afraid of having to open a "second round" of concessions in respect of social benefits at EC level. Do they have the same fear where vocational training is concerned? This does not seem to be the case, even if employers in some sectors "refuse to organize themselves for fear of being drawn into negotiating".

The methods used in this study are simple: the material stems first and foremost from the direct personal experience of the author, and from interviews with those

responsible for vocational training in international employers' professional organizations, in European administrations (Commission of the European Communities, OECD, Council of Europe, Economic and Social Committee), and in the universities, etc.

By cross-checking and double-checking, clear trends could be identified in a relatively unsettled area which is not without its contrasts and inequalities.

A synthesis report of all the studies undertaken by CEDEFOP is to be prepared in 1988 and discussed in a larger forum.

Burkart Sellin
Project Coordinator

# Part 1

## IN COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS (EC)

### Chapter 1

### THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT

#### Section 1 - General

Established by the Council of Ministers of the European Community in 1971 at the request of the social partners, the Standing Committee on Employment is not, legally speaking, a "Community institution"[1].

However, in view of the important role it could be encouraged to play in defining Community social policy, it is the only official body which provides for consultation between the social forces at EC level. It gives the social partners an opportunity to try to influence Community social policy at decision-making level.

Vocational training is clearly one of the main elements in employment policy. And the work of the Standing Committee deals directly with this. It is, however, rare for training to be discussed "per se". This is done more particularly at the level of the Advisory Committee on

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[1] Standing Committee on Employment
Council Decision of 14 December 1970 No 70/532/EC
(O.J. No L 273 of 17.12.1970)

Vocational Training. This subject is usually dealt with in the comments of the speakers in the Standing Committee against a wider background (for example, new technologies).

The manner in which the subjects are broached within the Committe depends in part on the agendas drawn up by the Steering Group of the Committee (consisting of one representative from each of the groups in the Committee) and in part on the conception of the working documents presented to the Committee by the European Commission. The latter sometimes presents documents dealing solely with vocational training.

## Section 2 - Composition

Chaired by the Minister for Social Affairs of the country which holds the presidency of the EC (for six months), the Committee comprises first and foremost the Ministers for Social Affairs of the Member States. In fact, during the last few years, and especially in certain countries, the Ministers have sometimes been replaced by "Secretaries of State" or their equivalents.

The counterparts of the Council of Ministers are the social partners, i.e.:

- the employers' representatives (Employers' Liaison Committee (ELC)) which takes in UNICE, CEEP which

represents public enterprises, and COPA which is the representative body for agriculture), and

- the employees' representatives (European Trade Union Confederation and various national trade unions).

The fourth voice in this dialogue is, of course, the Commission of the European Communities. Its mouthpiece is the Commissioner for Social Affairs and the Director General of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education (DG V). It is the Commission which paves the way for discussions by preparing the working documents which are presented to the different parties prior to the sessions.

It, therefore, plays an essential role even if the dialogue itself develops (or is supposed to develop) between the Ministers on the one hand and the social partners on the other.

In practice, the Chairman of the session leads the debate and the Commissioner for Social Affairs explains the viewpoint of the Commission on each item on the agenda.

In the same way, the European Trade Union Confederation and the Employers' Liaison Committee each has only one spokesman and it is often the case that exchanges of views take shape between the two organizations.

## Section 3 - Objectives

In the spirit of its founder members, the Committee should provide for the development of a social dialogue at European level by helping the Council of Ministers to elaborate its social policy. In practice, it is usually done in this way at national level. But, this is just what the Council of Ministers does not seem to want.

The Ministers have in fact been seen to be very possessive of their national prerogatives and in no way anxious to grant concessions at international level. Social progress should - for obvious electoral reasons - be accomplished in full view of, and for the benefit of **national** public opinion.

Furthermore, in employment policy as in other fields, government representatives have shown but little enthusiasm for the systems of their neighbours or for Community standards. This leads, during the sessions, to a series of monologues in which the Ministers of each country present their social systems as the models to be adopted.

In these circumstances, little progress has been made towards implementing the social chapter of the Treaty of Rome.

This state of affairs has, of course, provoked rebukes from the trade unions and has curbed the influence the social

partners could have wielded via the Standing Committee on Employment.

This illustrates, by way of conclusion, that the objectives of the Standing Committee on Employment have only partially been achieved, subject to what is said below on the role played by the social partners and the importance they attach to this Committee.

## Section 4 - Working structure

The Standing Committee on Employment meets three times a year. The agendas are prepared by a very small steering group on which are represented the Chairman, the social partners and the Director General for Social Affairs.

The meetings are chaired very actively by the Minister for Social Affairs from the country which holds presidency. Each goverment gives its point of view. The social partners gives their opinions often in an oral and written form and the Commission comments orally on the documents which it presented prior to the meeting.

As described above, it is not often the case that a discussion arises on any given topic - and many people deplore this fact. The European Trade Union Confederation often accuses the employers of blocking this dialogue but the main blame would seem to lie with governments.

At the end of the day (that is the duration of a session), the Chairman is responsible for drawing conclusions which, in most cases, have been prepared in the form of a first draft prior to the meeting and already presented behind the scenes to the social partners. The Employers' Liaison Committee attaches the very greatest importance to the scope of the conclusions defined in this way. Up to now, it has opposed joint conclusions, preludes to possible "negotiations".

## Section 5 - Subjects

The Standing Committee on Employment has an advisory function. This Committee advises the Council of Ministers during the meetings which should preferably take place before the actual meetings of the Council of Ministers. The subjects studied concern employment policy and more specifically, as already mentioned, vocational training. Generally, it should be noted that:

- a broad spectrum of subjects is covered. With the exception of some very specific social matters, the Standing Committee on Employment touches on almost all aspects of social policy;

- employment and economic policies are obviously very closely linked. It is often the case that the working documents (for example those concerning unemployment) take in important economic aspects.

## Section 6 - Assessment

Of course, no-one claims to be satisfied with the way the Standing Committee on Employment functions. On several occasions in recent years, there has been talk of reviewing the procedures of this Committee. However, it is not the procedures which are deficient; the weakness of the Committee lies in the Council's absence of political will to make it function properly.

What does the Employers' Liaison Committee think?

Despite the shortcomings described here, the employers' representatives attach importance to maintaining the Standing Committee on Employment.

It must be recognized that even if the social partners are systematically involved in the work of the European Commission, they do not - with the exception of the Committee - have any official channel to influence the Council's decisions.

It is true that the national federations have contact with "their" Minister for Social Affairs prior to the Council's sessions. But this is not enough and there is a risk of this taking place in a disjointed manner! For this very reason, there must be action at Community level.

The Standing Committee on Employment constitutes, at least theoretically, an excellent instrument for this purpose.

It should be borne in mind that the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training, too, by definition only prepares opinions and although it has government representatives, they are not of ministerial level.

## Section 7 - Prospects

Despite the ambiguities and the uncertainties described above, it is likely that the Standing Committee on Employment will continue its work, unless there is a sudden and profound disruption in the social policy of the European Community. It is highly unlikely that the two factors described above will be modified in the near future, these being on the one hand, the "wait-and-see" and altogether paralyzing attitude of the Council of Ministers and, on the other, the importance attached, despite everything, by the social partners and perhaps in particular by the employees' representatives to "their Standing Committee on Employment".

## Chapter 2

## THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### Section 1 - Working structure

The existence of this Advisory Committee is not foreseen in the Treaty of Rome[2]. It was set up by the EC Commission in accordance with the ten principles of vocational training established by the Council on 3 April 1963. It is **the** forum for consultation between the social partners at Community level. It is a tripartite body presided over by the Commission. Today, the employers' and employees' representatives have an opportunity to prepare themselves separately for the plenary sessions of the Committee which are held on average three times a year. The Commission enables the social partners to come together on the morning of the first day of the Committee's session. Consequently,

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[2] Advisory Committee on Vocational Training
**Fourth principle**, last paragraph of the Council Decision 63/266 EC of 2 April 1963 establishing the general principles for the implementation of a common vocational training policy (O.J. No 63 of 20.4.1963).

Council Decision of 18 December 1963 (63/688/EC) establishing the **statutes** of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (O.J. No 190 of 30.12.1963).

Council Decision of 9 April 1968 (68/189/EC) **modifying** these statutes (O.J. No L 91 of 12.4.1968).

**Internal Regulation** - Doc. 625/65 (soc. 65).

each group appoints a spokesman to elaborate its point of view on a given subject.

Furthermore, the Commission has set up a steering group comprising 10 representatives from the three groups on the Committee (including permanent representatives of UNICE and the European Trade Union Confederation).

Meeting between the plenary sessions, this group can orientate and prepare the procedures of the Committee. It also enables the social partners to exert more influence on the way it works. As for the Commission, it can adjust the agendas and present projects "more in touch with reality".

The Commission submits all its proposals on vocational training to the Advisory Committee for comment. Thus, the Committee has been voicing its opinion on a very wide range of subjects for 23 years.

The social partners have played a considerable role here although cohesion between the two groups has been achieved above all at national level or, at best, between the combined groups of employers and employees. To all appearances, the contacts - other than those in the corridors - do not seem to have brought the two groups closer together. Where there is sometimes convergence, this is de facto. On the other hand, it should be stressed that there have been no clashes between the two groups.

It should be remembered that in the EC the national systems of vocational training are very different and in each country the social partners and government representatives are extremely possessive of their prerogatives, basing their arguments in most cases on the structures with which they are familiar.

## Section 2 - Evaluation

The employers believe that the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training has become more efficient in recent years. The approach to problems is felt to be more concrete than in the past. It is, however, regrettable that for the reasons listed above, there is no dialogue between the employers' group and that of the employees.

The employers are happy to stress the positive results and the efficacy of the Committee. They feel that, especially under their influence, the subjects presented by the EC Commission are realistic and frequently correspond to the preoccupations of the social partners. Furthermore, they very much appreciate the opportunity to present their opinions **"in good time"**.

Thus, Community policy on vocational training is making progress. Here are three precise examples:

- the **comparability of qualifications** has been the subject of a decision of the Council of Ministers. Prior to this, the over-ambitious topic "equivalence of qualifications" had been making no headway for years;

- the **alternance** approach was advocated by the EC Commission which has succeeded in "passing on" this idea to most Member States. In a very large part of the Community this approach is accepted today although in some States it did not even exist before. The social partners are satisfied with this development;

- the Commission of the European Communities is today more "directly in touch" with the unemployment problems of its Member States.

As for the Commission, it believes the contribution made by the social partners in the Committee to be very positive. Their participation is described as "lively". Thus, the Commission is better equipped to formulate its proposals, in direct touch with reality. It has contacts with the experts, from whom it obtains information it did not have beforehand, and which it can then update.

The Commission would, however, like to see improvements in the "driving force" role of the social partners. In some cases, the latter could do more to make known the demands of Directorate-General V at national level. It is necessary for there to be even better understanding of the intentions behind these demands in the Member States.

The new subjects which are to be submitted to the Committee mainly deal with training in small and medium-sized enterprises, transition from school to work, and continuing education and training...

By way of conclusion, it could be said that the role of the social partners on the Advisory Committee is positive and has given them an opportunity to really influence the proposals of the Commission. The latter, in turn, is surrounded by training experts. But, as we have seen, cooperation between the social partners has very real limits.

# Chapter 3

## THE ECSC CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### Section 1 - General

In 1951, the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community envisaged in Article 18 the creation of a Consultative Committee attached to the High Authority[3]. The Committee represents producers, workers, consumers and dealers. The High Authority may consult the Consultative Committee mainly for "the information it requires to assess the possibilities for improving working conditions and living standards for workers in the industries within its province, and the threats to those standards" (Art. 46, 5).

Vocational training must be viewed in this light.

Since 1954, the Committee has set up two Mixed Committees, one for steel and one for coal. These are:

- the Mixed Committee for the Harmonization of Working Conditions in the Coal Industry;

- the Mixed Committee for the Harmonization of Working Conditions in the Steel Industry.

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[3] ECSC Consultative Committee
The 1951 Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community: Article 18

These Committees became permanent bodies in the 1970s. They meet twice a year in plenary sessions. Furthermore, they have also set up working groups.

Let us distinguish:

## Section 2 - The Mixed Steel Committee

It does not carry out comparative studies and its discussions are more on a political level: exchanges of views mainly concerning current developments in the sector. The producers' representatives seem to be very prudent here.

If this Committee so desired, it could do more, but up to now, it has not wished to do so.

Basically, two kinds of subjects are dealt with by this Committee:

a) the subject of "flexibility", possible salary cuts...

b) vocational training (but always at the information level). At present, most of the information is provided at national level, little at EC level. Both the employees' representatives and the employers' representatives have adopted an open attitude. They often express jointly the national viewpoints on which they have reached agreement.

It would be useful to mention three current sources of information:

- information given on 2 July 1985 by a **CEDEFOP representative** on the "initial and continuing training of skilled workers in the EC. What is the situation in the metal industry?" The author of this report examines the extent to which the conclusions in the general CEDEFOP studies can be transposed to the metal sector. In brief, the main ideas which have been developed are the following:

  . apprenticeship today constitutes a step back because of the employment crisis;
  . there is a relatively developed division of occupations in the metal sector;
  . manual work is discredited today;
  . there is a gap between young skilled workers searching in vain for work and older workers looking for an opportunity to undergo difficult retraining;
  . new kinds of training/employment contracts give preference to young people;
  . initial and continuing education and training should be an integral feature in an active employment policy and not dealt with separately;
  . in order to adapt workers' skills to new technologies, steps must be taken **well before** the introduction of such technologies;

. it would be desirable for the same moves to be taken in the steel industry as in other sectors in order to define concrete new occupational profiles oriented towards concrete needs.

- On 25 November 1985 a paper was delivered to the "Mixed Steel Committee" by an authorized representative of the German company "Thyssen Niederrhein AG". He described the training system of this company which has cut its workforce by 60% in the last 20 years but has tried to retrain these workers either for jobs within the company or with the Thyssen Group. This has had a considerable influence on the envisaged continuing training systems.

  In this paper emphasis was placed on:

  . the absolute need to motivate the workforce to undergo further training and continuing training. A recognized vocational qualification must be the goal;
  . "key skills" (creativity, social awareness, ability to plan, ability to communicate...) in initial training. This "must not be limited to the transfer of special know-how which is then used to carry out general tasks".

  This paper also stresses the advantages of the vocational training record book which gives a fair idea of a worker's qualifications.

Finally, the emphasis is placed on the very great need to overhaul the integrated training system: systematic and individualized planning of personal development using "development tables".

- A French expert gave a talk on 27 October 1986 on the problems posed by extensive restructuring; here, this only concerns relocated workers who have to acquire new skills and find themselves in heterogeneous work groups.

Exchanges of information of this kind are to continue in the future and the first topics are to be: initial training, training for relocated workers (those who switch from one industry to another), and training for those who cannot acquire new skills.

It should be noted that present budgetary constraints weigh on the two Mixed Committees, although to a lesser degree on the "Coal" Committee as not all Member States have this kind of industry (there are four coal-producing countries). The "Steel" Committee concerns more countries.

In July 1985 it studied an "overview of concrete proposals for studying the problem of initial and continuing vocational training by the joint 'Steel' Committee". The subjects which could be handled in this way are described below on the understanding that the Committee is to limit

itself to the problem of training for workers who are still employed in the steel industry.

Three aspects have been defined:

- continuing training resulting from the settting up of new plants;
- special continuing training made necessary by slight modifications in the technical or technological contents of jobs;
- continuing training as a means of increasing occupational skills and of preparing for possible changes.

"Possible" subjects are:

- initial and continuing training needs, taking into account workers' interests and the high costs of training;
- different organizational forms of initial and continuing training. The different training systems in EC Member States could be compared. The effects on employment and increased productivity could also be studied;
- the agreement of workers: motivation;
- the results of training: their evaluation is an absolute must if training measures "are not to remain a costly abstract concept for the firm and of no use for workers";
- the financial aspects: are the costs to be borne by the public authorities or by the enterprise, itself? It is

felt that what goes beyond the needs of the enterprise should be financed by public authorities.

## Section 3 - The "Mixed Coal Committee"

The work of this Committee is conceived in a different manner from that of the "Steel Committee". It is more concrete and more often takes the form of synoptic tables on vocational training. These tables are updated regularly.

The four coal-producing countries in the EC are Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United Kingdom. Between 1984 and 1986, the Mixed Committee conducted, on behalf of these four countries, a study of "training for a first job in the coal industry" based on an outline which can be found at the end of this chapter. A synthesis of the national reports has been drawn up (Mr A. Geissler), the content and general character of which are worthy of note:

a) Two basic concerns are shared by all these countries:

- adaptation to special underground working conditions,
- job security.

In the EC, this training is provided almost exclusively by the institutions which are directly responsible to the coalmining industry.

b) The training systems which have been studied are mainly geared towards **young people** who have only attended basic school education.

c) Training for a first job differs only slightly from country to country, mostly with regard to remuneration. Thus, in Belgium the programmes are individualized; the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom make fundamental distinctions according to the aptitude levels of the apprentices. In all these countries, training is normally provided on premises specially set up by and located on the coal fields which organize training. The engineers attend courses of practical training in the coal fields, too, when they enter service. In some cases this training may take place during the final phase of their studies.

d) Training costs in France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom amount to approximately UA 13 640 (for around six months). It should be noted that in Belgium, the public authorities bear a considerable share of the costs of this training. Remuneration is usually higher in the case of underground work.

In conclusion, this report notes that the EC coal boards "give special priority to vocational training". They invest in it "a special intensity and quality". This high standard of training enables the EC to maintain both the level of yield and a very high level of job security.

Annex: The outline for the study mentioned above.

Mixed Committee for the Harmonization of Working Conditions in the Coal Industry

14 February 1984

Subject

Training for a first job in the coalmining industry

1. General description and objectives

1.1 Aims of training
1.2 General description of training and of the jobs to which it relates
1.3 Legal bases

2. Categories of persons recruited for a first job

2.1 Young persons (aged under 18)
2.2 Adults

3. Training for a first job

3.1 Underground workers

3.1.1 Miners:
- requirments for admission to training,
- place of training,

- content of training,
- duration of training,
- completion of training/qualification.

3.1.2 Fitter/mechanic

3.1.3 Electrician/electrical mechanic

3.1.4 Other workers

3.2 Surface workers

3.3 Technical surveyors/mining surveyors

3.4 Supervisory staff/managerial staff

3.4.1 Technicians

3.4.2 (Qualified) engineers

4. Number of persons to be trained (persons trained), costs and remuneration

# Chapter 4

## THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

### Section 1 - Structure, task and management

With an annual budget at present amounting to 2 500 million ECU, the European Social Fund is the main instrument of EC social policy[4]. It accounts for 7% of the overall EC budget. In 1984, applications for assistance increased to 3 357 million ECU. In the same year, almost two million workers received aid from the European Social Fund (of whom 33% were women).

In the Treaty of Rome (Articles 123 to 128) the European Social Fund is seen as the spearhead of Community social policy.

It has the **task** (Article 123) of "rendering the employment of workers easier and of increasing their geographical and occupational mobility within the Community".

The European Social Fund is **administered** (Article 124) by the Commission, assisted by a tripartite Committee of the European Social Fund.

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[4] European Social Fund
Treaty establishing the European Community, Articles 123 to 128. For the Committee: Article 124.

Over the years, the Council has entrusted new tasks to the European Social Fund (Article 126) according to the economic situation. Thus, since 1983, at least 75% of the credits have been earmarked for programmes for young people.

The Treaty of Rome envisages (Article 125) assistance by the European Social Fund for workers in the form of:

- vocational retraining,
- resettlement allowances,
- assistance for workers "to maintain the same wage level pending their full reemployment.

The European Social Fund only becomes involved in schemes if 50% of the expenditure incurred is borne by the Member State itself (or by the body governed by public law).

## Section 2 - Working structure

Only the Member States can submit applications for assistance. These are addressed to the European Commission (Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs) which administers the European Social Fund. It is this body which assesses and then approves the applications in line with the criteria established by the Council. In this work, it is assisted by the **Committee of the European Social Fund.**

The Commission selects the dossiers which it is to submit to the Committee. The latter is chaired by a member of the Commission and made up of government representatives, and representatives of employers' and trade union organizations. It played a very active role in the beginnings of the Community. Today, its activities have been curbed somewhat by the volume of applications it has to deal with (6 500 applications in 1986). It is only in recent years that the European Social Fund has become known to the general public. This explains the flood of applications. It is, in fact, physically impossible for the Committee members to familiarize themselves with the dossiers. Furthermore, a certain degree of immobility has crept in as a result of the concern which has developed in the Member States to obtain a "fair return" (each Member State tries to recuperate what it has put in).

The result is that those EC Member States who enjoy a better employment situation, do not give much free rein to the solidarity principle vis-à-vis countries in which the employment situation has deteriorated drastically.

Of course, the Committee only submits opinions to the Commission. The latter may ignore them but, in that case, it must give reasons for doing so.

Bearing in mind what has been said above, the Committee does play a by no means unimportant role. However, the constituent delegations come together **on the basis of**

**national interests** far more than **on the basis of group interests** (employers, employees, farmers...).

Thus, the social partners, as such, do not play in this Committee the role which might have been expected of them. Certainly, the Committee meetings are sometimes preceded by preparatory (separate) meeting of the employers' and employees' groups. However, once the plenary sessions have begun, these groups tend to fall apart in favour of national realities. A fortiori, there can be no talk of orientations common to the overall group of the social partners.

The employers consider, moreover, that the administration of the European Social Fund is not sound because the merits of the dossiers are no longer considered in conjunction with the Fund's objectives. Its administration has become mechanistic, mathematical through the all too frequent application of the rule of "linear reduction".

Today, it seems that the activities of the European Social Fund do not reach to a sufficient degree the right target groups because the final control of these activities rests with the national authorities. How can we know whether the 12 Member States use a wise system of selection? The employers criticize the waste of resources caused by mismanagement ("ad hoc" projects and bodies).

## Section 3 - Rules of the game

What activities are carried out by the Committee members? How do they ensure that it functions properly? As can be seen below, most of the measures have to do with vocational training.

Apart from examining the applications for assistance, the Committee of the European Social Fund devotes its time:

- to preparing the annual budgets;
- to fixing guidelines for the next three financial years (guidelines can be adjusted along the way). Here, it is a matter of fixing the criteria for priority financing;
- to reexamining its statutes: every five years. The next review is to take place on 31 December 1988.

It is worthwhile mentioning here the assessment criteria of the Commission and the Consultative Committee.

1. Criteria for approval:

   - conformity with the form "application for assistance from the European Social Fund"
   - applications must be submitted to the Commission before 21 October of the financial year preceding the one for which assistance is to be granted.

2. Eligibility criteria: the European Social Fund's assistance scheme is aimed at:

- certain kinds of activities:

a) vocational training (80%) (but this may not be skill upgrading, retraining or guidance);
b) employment aids (17%): this assistance is for recruitment to jobs in businesses and to jobs which benefit the general community.

- certain groups of persons:

a) young people under the age of 25: excluding periods in which compulsory education applies;
b) workers above the age of 25:
   . employed in small or medium-sized enterprises with less than 500 employees,
   . trainers,
   . persons in difficulty.

- certain kinds of expenditure:

   . trainees' allowances,
   . preparation of schemes,
   . running of schemes.

- ways of financing:

  In order to qualify for aid from the European Social Fund, the Member State must put up an equal amount. However, in the case of regions with absolute priority, the share of the European Social Fund can increase to as much as 55%. (The selection criteria for the regions are: a high unemployment rate, a weak gross domestic product, and major migratory fluxes).

3. Priorities:

It was necessary to draw up a list of priorities because at present twice as many applications are made as can be accepted.

These interlinked priorities are laid down in the "Guidelines" which are approved each year for a period of three years.

They have:

a) a regional character. A distinction can be made between:

   - regions with absolute priority. These are principally: Greece and Portugal in their entirety, Northern Ireland, Mezzogiorno, Spanish

regions (N.B. 44% of the appropriations must go to absolute priority regions);

- regions with simple priority: these priorities are fixed each year by the Commission according to unemployment levels and the GDP. These priorities cover at present 56% of the working population.

b) a qualitative character:

- general conditions: no assistance is given for schemes lasting less than 200 hours or schemes which do not devote at least 40 hours to new technologies. Greece, Portugal and Spain are not bound by this regulation.

- grants in aid subject to age restrictions. Priority is given:
  . in the case of young people, to assistance for alternance training for young people aged at least 18 and to assistance for the recruitment of young people under 25;
  . in the case of adults, to assistance for the long-term unemployed and for the salaried employees of small and medium-sized enterprises;

- grants in aid not subject to age restrictions. Priority is given to assistance:

- for training linked to community activities, for example the integrated mediterranean programes;
- for training in new technologies within the framework of research and development programmes (BRITE, RACE, EUREKA). This only applies to small and medium-sized enterprises;
- for retraining activities.

The above criteria are cumulative and must, in turn, correspond to the budgetary appropriations which are at present as follows:

1. 75% of all the available appropriations must be channelled into schemes for young people under the age of 25.

2. 5% are reserved for pilot projects (special activities).

The remaining 20% can be earmarked for assistance for adult workers.

Within these budgetary constraints, a dossier has more chance of being accepted if it meets as many of the above criteria as possible.

## Section 4 - Prospects and evaluation

The European Parliament believes that the appropriations earmarked at present for the European Social Fund are not sufficient. The European Social Fund is restricted by the overall volume of the EC budget in which the EAGGF (common agricultural policy) takes in a very large share.

Faced with the impossibility of increasing the appropriations in the short term, some people would like the Fund's assistance to be concentrated on more "clearly defined" Community schemes. The Council, it seems, would only accept this idea by in return for compensation for the Member States.

The European Commission, for its part, has always rejected the concept of national quotas, which would be the very negation of the Community principle.

Major reforms of the European Social Fund could, however, take place soon because, in applying the Single Act, the Commission must reorganize all the structural funds, mainly the Social Fund. It is studying this reform now. At this time, it is too early to indicate the direction this reform is going to take.

In the meantime, however, the European Social Fund is the most important Community instrument in the field of vocational training. In the operation of this Fund, and by way of the Committee, the Social Partners play an important

role as, in arithmetic terms, they are in the majority on this Committee.

All the same, the reality is different and the "crystallizations" at national level often take precedence over the common attitudes within the combined employers' group or within the combined workers' group. A fortiori, there are some grounds for optimism that a dialogue may take place between these two partners at EC level.

## Chapter 5

## THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

1. In 1974 this Committee[5] had, through its own initiative opinion, proposed the creation of an European Centre for the Development of Vocational training. This Committee which, in this respect, can be considered as the "father" of CEDEFOP wanted to create an instrument for the social partners.

2. It can be said that prior to that the Committee members had enjoyed considerable personal independence. In the course of the last ten years, the role of the three **groups** (social partners) has been strengthened and the liaison between the Committee and the European Trade Union Confederation and UNICE is closer than ever before.

3. In vocational training, there is a considerable convergence of views between the social partners. First, several aspects of one established fact have been recognized unanimously: the renewed importance of training in the face of new technologies, "polyvalency". On the Committee, almost all opinions

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[5] The Economic and Social Committee
- Treaty establishing the European Community Articles 193 to 198.
- Five opinions on education and vocational training. Youth unemployment (August 1978).

are adopted **unanimously** as far as training is concerned, at least as long as this is a question of general principles. By their very nature, they are unlikely to provoke conflicts and the subjects studied are almost always of this kind. There may be less convergence when the subjects become more concrete. Let us quote in this context: the division of responsibilities for training and education between the undertaking and society, training which does not lead to permanent employment, financing of training, vocational qualifications...

But the opinions of a general character (and they almost all are) meet with unanimous approval. Let us quote for example, the social consequences of new technologies, alternance training, vocational training in the 1980s, education and training of young workers, the transition from school to working life...

Mention should also be made of the colloquium on new technologies organized by the Committee in 1985. One of the three information reports dealt with their social consequences (employment and vocational training).

4. Thus, there are few differences of opinion on these matters and there is said to be "good general understanding" which has been reinforced in the last three to four years by personal factors. This understanding has, of course, been helped by the fact that the EC has

not adopted a very interventionist stance as far as training is concerned.

This does not mean that the social partners hold joint preparatory meetings, but their representatives do talk to each other and similar viewpoints become clear very quickly, for example, concerning the recognition of gaps between education and training on the one hand, and the developing needs of enterprises on the other.

Thus, the evaluation in this chapter is, on the whole, positive.

## Chapter 6

## TRIPARTITE CONFERENCES

Between 1974 and 1978 the Council of Ministers organized Tripartite Conferences at EC level. The parties represented at these Conferences were the same as those represented on the Standing Committee on Employment (see page 6), plus the Ministers for Economic Affairs from the Member States. This amalgam led to the overly general character of the debates at these conferences. The topic of which all aspects were to be examined, in a period of low economic activity, was "growth and employment". The employers' representatives gave maximum priority to economic imperatives whereas the employees adopted the opposing standpoint. This caused some misunderstanding which, in turn, led to the workers becoming disillusioned with these meetings. The 1978 Conference was the last following a "fatal" disagreement between the Chairman and the European Trade Union Confederation on the subject of reducing working hours. Today, the "social dialogue" of Val Duchesse has taken up where these conferences left off.

It is understandable that given the extremely general nature of the subjects treated at the conferences, vocational training has never been examined in its own right. At most, it has been touched upon under the heading "employment".

In the Tripartite Conferences, it was not possible at any time to speak of cooperation amongst the social partners. Only at one Conference in 1976 did it end in a joint statement. In all other cases, the Chairman of the Conference was solely responsible for drafting a statement.

## Chapter 7

## THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING (CEDEFOP)

### Section 1 - General

This Centre[6], just like the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Dublin), was established in 1975 by the Council of Ministers mainly as an instrument for the social partners. It gives them a privileged forum for cooperation in the field of vocational training. The present structures of CEDEFOP have, furthermore, been conceived with this goal in mind. The social partners, today, defend these structures against reform projects which could threaten them.

### Section 2 - Structure

The executive body of CEDEFOP is its Management Board and the Bureau derived from it. The composition of the Management Board is a true reflection of the objectives described above and of the position which the Centre's "founding fathers" wanted to give to the social partners.

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[6] CEDEFOP, Regulation No 337/75 of the Council of the European Communities

This Board is quadripartite: 12 employees' representatives, 12 employers' representatives, 12 government representatives, and 3 representatives from the Commission of the European Communities. As can be seen, the social partners, in arithmetic terms, are in the majority. The Bureau reflects these proportions. Another special feature must be pointed out: both the employees' group and the employers' group - and they alone - have a "coordinator" who ensures the cohesion of each group and facilitates their representation. In the employers' group, the coordinator must coordinate very diverse interests: private employers, farmers, public enterprises...

The Director and the Deputy Director of CEDEFOP traditionally come from employer and trade union circles.

It should be noted that the CEDEFOP budget is part of the budget of the Commission of the European Communities.

## Section 3 - The role of the social partners

Since 1975, the social partners have indeed played a decisive role in the workings of CEDEFOP.

- The employers' and employees' groups prepare their work separately during the first part of the Management Board's sessions. The afternoon of the first day of such a session is systematically set aside for the meetings of the groups. Contact between them is

ensured, as need arises, by the two coordinators. It is also the case, though less frequently, that the employers' and employees' groups meet between the sessions.

These meetings enable each group to harmonize the contributions of the different members of the Management Board. Normally, in the course of the plenary session which takes place after these meetings (and which may, therefore, be shorter!), there will only be one speaker from each group for each of the items on the agenda. This is not a formal arrangement but the meetings very often proceed in this manner.

It is more seldom but still sometimes the case that converging viewpoints are expressed by the representatives of the social partners. This is never quite by chance and may be the result of informal contacts between the two groups at the sessions in Berlin, or in Brussels between the European Trade Union Confederation and UNICE. It is clear that the two coordinators act as "go-betweens" here. Moreover, they liaise in a frequently informal manner between the Chairman of the Management Board and the representatives of the EC Commission.

Let us add that when a new Management Board is to be appointed, the coordinators present - after subtle dosing - the candidates for this Board.

- During the numerous **seminars** organized by CEDEFOP, the social partners play, mutatis mutandis, the same role as on the Management Board. This applies both during the seminars and, more particularly, during their preparation. It is notably the coordinators of the social partners who draw up the employers' and workers' delegations, ensuring balanced representation of the interests to be defended according to the problem to be discussed.

- Finally, the social partners propose numerous experts or consultants to CEDEFOP for the examination of given subjects. In this respect, parity is most often respected de facto.

These different examples are far from complete but they do give a good impression of the way in which the representatives of the social partners, with varying degrees of coordination depending on the subject and period, play a very active but by no means exclusive role in all circles of CEDEFOP. Again, this is in line with the political desire which prevailed when this Centre was established.

The question to be answered today is whether the influence of the social partners should be increased, maintained or reduced. Opinion is, of course, very divided on this point. The social partners are certain to defend their prerogatives.

As there is always room for improvement, it must be hoped that cooperation among the social partners will increase at CEDEFOP level and that their influence in the administration of this body will continue to produce positive results.

Undoubtedly, any attempts to reduce their influence within CEDEFOP would mean deviating from the set goal and would entail a loss for the field of continuing education and training. The EC Commission and the European Parliament will play an essential role in the developments to come.

# Part II

## IN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BEYOND THE EC

## Chapter 1

## AT OECD LEVEL

### Section 1 - General

In 1962, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)[7] decided to consult non-governmental organizations which were most representative of the different branches of economic life. Thus, it recognized as the representatives of the social partners:

- The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) made up of 40 trade union organizations representing 60 million members;
- The Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC)[8] bringing together employers' organizations from 24 OECD Member States.

These two organizations submit their recommendations to OECD on economic and social matters.

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[7] OECD: Convention of 14.12.1960 whih came into force on 30.9.1961.

[8] BIAC: OECD Council Decision of March 1962.

TUAC and BIAC are consulted **separately** by OECD, which does not exclude, of course, contacts between the two. But these are far from being on a regular basis. They are rather sporadic in nature but have increased recently.

In the field of vocational training, there had been no contacts between the two organizations until quite recently. In 1986, contact was established. The results are analyzed below. BIAC would like to see a gradual intensification of these links.

## Section 2 - The joint statement of TUAC and BIAC on "full employment and growth, a social and economic goal"

This statement was published in April 1986. It is quite remarkable and has benefited from the support of these two organizations who brought it to the attention of OECD and its member governments.

Obviously, the economic climate has favoured this coming together in an area which is described very clearly in the title of the statement.

The subdivisions of this statement are referred to below. Only those ones have been developed which have directly to do with training. These are:

1. Full employment, a social and economic goal

   This chapter denounces artificial or unproductive jobs and fictitious training schemes.

2. Full employment and a satisfactory rate of economic growth at the centre of deliberations on economic policy

3. The current unemployment situation in OECD countries

4. Full employment and investment policies

5. Education, retraining and flexibility on the labour market

   BIAC and TUAC recognize that "inflexibility or the failure of the labour markets to adjust to structural changes may constitute an obstacle to full employment".

   They encourage labour mobility and stress the urgent need for improvements in education, training...

   There follows a statement that retraining facilitates adaptability, that "education, training and retraining of the workforce must constitute a continuing process in order to avoid bottlenecks and distorsions...".

This statement stresses also the duty of the social partners to inform those responsible for education and training of the needs of the labour market.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the length of time needed to bring education and training into line with change is one reason for youth unemployment.

The transition from school to working life is made easier by "vocational training incorporated into the enterprise". This statement also advocates incentives to adaptability. These adaptability policies could be discussed in collective negotiations. They would have to cover "all conditions of work in relation to changing circumstances".

In conclusion, the authors encourage OECD governments to increase rapidly the level of employment. This statement is the best example of TUAC and BIAC cooperation in the employment field and, consequently, in vocational training.

In this area which is felt to be less controversial, contacts continue between the two organizations which represent the social partners in the OECD.

## Section 3 - Work Flexibility

A major debate has begun at OECD level on the subject of work flexibility. Ideas and recommendations have been formulated by a group of "high powered" experts. Although these experts express their ideas in a purely personal capacity, they do come from the three groups: employers, employees and governments.

This group's report was published in 1986. It is a further example of cooperation between the social partners (and governments) on a subject which covers vocational training in a unique way. The report is now being discussed by TUAC and BIAC representatives with whom preliminary and informal consultations had taken place.

This report analyzes the different components of flexibility, i.e.:

1. Costs of the workforce
2. Employment conditions (job protection)
   The report asks what training will be provided for marginal workers on the concealed labour market.
3. Work patterns and habits (organization)
4. Regulations
5. Internal and external mobility of an enterprise
   This chapter deals with training. The report requests that "young people be given the desired education and training so as to enable them to change jobs by moving from their own country to a foreign one". The training

opportunities are looked at from the angle of incentives to mobility. The report criticizes the obstacles to mobility in Europe.

6. Education and training
   These are considered as "the necessary precursors to adjustment, innovation, growth in employment and improvement in the quality of life". These are the keys to greater flexibility whereas the rigidities of the education system constitute considerable obstacles to change.

Basic education must be oriented towards more general education rather than towards narrow training. Training and retraining must be offered to a growing number of workers.

The report welcomes the fact that enterprises are assuming responsibility for training. Finally, it would like to see greater awareness of the consequences of inadequate or outdated training.

This report concludes by stressing the necessity for a "social pact" under whose terms the interested parties would commit themselves to looking for ways of jointly improving the efficacy of the economy and of achieving social progress (including training).

## Section 4 - The report on training in and by industry within the framework of education and training after compulsory schooling

Between 23 and 25 June 1986, experts came together at OECD in their individual capacity and not as representatives of institutions. This was a technical meeting to discuss a precise subject within the framework of the OECD employees'/employers' programme. This is, therefore, a further example of cooperation between the social partners.

These experts drew up a report for the social partners and for the relevent OECD committees. It should, furthermore, be noted that the meeting had been prepared in collaboration with BIAC and TUAC.

What is in the report? It analyzes recent initiatives and points out recommendations and orientations. It can be summarized as follows in line with the original sequence of chapters:

1. The role of training in the present context

   The growth of the tertiary sector (and less specialized training schemes) and the relative importance of qualifications linked to new technologies are stressed first. In a general way, mention is made of a marked trend towards an increase in qualification level and, above all, in the entrance threshold to the labour

market. Furthermore, there is a "strong tendency towards dualism on the labour market with, on the one hand, secure, well paid and protected jobs and, on the other, jobs with the inverse characteristics (polarization phenomenon).

It is noted that training is a cumulative process: the more a person benefits from it, the more he/she is motivated to acquire further qualifications.

Training, indispensable though it is, is no panacea. It should have a preventive character and be "conceived as a precursor to industrial restructuring operations".

2. Delimitation of responsibilities vis-à-vis training and its organization

The limits to the role of the enterprise have been recognized. The latter must be conceived as a permanent apprenticeship location. Agreement has been reached on the following points:

a) a split has been advocated: training on a wide basis at school and specialized vocational training in the enterprise;
b) negotiations between the social partners must play an essential role here;
c) it is difficult to forecast what qualifications will be needed. Direct contact between the school

and the enterprise is essential. This leads quite naturally to alternance systems.

3. Qualifications: training structures and contents

The increase in jobs in service industries means it is no longer necessary to provide programmes as specialized as those required by industry. Vocational training must be conceived on a broad basis: it must allow adaptability and aim to give "wider understanding of the environment".

This report stresses the need for improved articulation between general training and vocational training with a view to further training. In this respect, it reiterates the advantages of educational leave.

Finally, the experts are interested in the recognition or **validation of acquired skills.** They stress the advantages of providing for a system of certification for additional skills acquired in continuing training schemes.

4. Resources: funds and trainers

- It is difficult to evaluate the cost of in-firm training. Here, we must single out the countries who have introduced taxes to cover these costs (France).

Businesses should not consider training as an expense but rather as a non-material investment. There is agreement that the financing of initial training should be incumbent first on the state and that of workers on the enterprise. The main share of training costs for schemes for the unemployed must be borne by the state.

- Trainers: it is very difficult to assess their abilities.

This then is the evaluation of the object, in the July 1986 report, of a wide consensus between employers' representatives and employees' representatives who expressed their views, let it be remembered, as private individuals.

## Section 5 - BIAC statement (4 June 1986)

BIAC was consulted separately by the Bureau of the OECD Education Committee in June 1986. On that occasion, it gave its opinion on the 1987 work programme of the Education Committee.

It expressed its regret that the social partners are not consulted more often and commented on the orientation of the Committee's current activities in the following areas:

- The corresponding financial resources have to be found for an education system which is desired politically.
- The Education Committee restricts itself to describing the restructuring processes.
- New educational methods and new organizational structures are necessary.
- The lack of technicians in the private sector was stressed. The Member States must "orient their educational policies towards more direct access to channels which lead to the private sector".
- Outdated and obsolete areas must be removed from educational programmes.
- The teaching methods studied by the Education Committee are not innovative enough.
- BIAC advocates that school administrations and training centres cooperate more with enterprises and social partners. The respective roles of the world of education and the world of work must be mapped out as must the possible forms of cooperation between the different partners.

## Section 6 - BIAC comments on future policies (1982)

Let us end this description of the activities of the social partners by describing BIAC's comments in April 1982 on the OECD report on education and vocational training policies for the future (Doc. ED/MAS/JWP (81)4).

Here, BIAC calls for a larger pool of qualified staff in the industrial sector whilst at the same time recognizing that there is no single solution for all of the OECD Member States. It stresses that the higher the level of training, the greater the contribution the employees can make to their work, and the greater their ability to undergo subsequent retraining.

Finally, the employers again stressed their willingness to take part in discussions in the field of vocational education and training.

# Chapter 2

# INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

## Section 1 - General

This organization bears general responsibility in the field of vocational training, and has the role of directing and coordinating. It is a tripartite body; on the employer side it is represented by the International Employers' Organization (IEO).

Vocational training, a vast area taking in many aspects, has often been mentioned in the "meetings of industry"[9] which are organized, at intervals of between five and eight years, for the large industrial sectors. Yet it has not been the subject of meetings between the social partners of EC Member States. Nevertheless, one "meeting of industry" did dedicate one of the two items on its agenda to vocational training. In 1983 the Engineering Trades Committee examined "the training and retraining of male and female workers in engineering trades, with special reference to technological change". A broad description of

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[9] Industrial Committees:
- Standing Order 1963. II Purposes and functions of Industrial and analogous Committees (Governing Body 8.3.1963 at its 154th session).
- Engineering Trades Committee, 11th session in 1983. Memo on work (IC/MT/11/17).
- Iron and Steel Committee, 11th session in 1986. General report (Report I).

this work is given in Chapter 2 in Part III. It is a good example of cooperation between the social partners.

ILO also has an International Centre for Continuing Vocational and Technical Training in Turin which is responsible for the practical application of decisions concerning vocational training.

Finally, in April 1986, a meeting of experts discussed the possibility of holding a world conference on training. This conference may take place during the second half of 1989 - "financial resources permitting".

## Section 2 - Brief sketch of the juridical instruments of ILO

Without being the direct consequence of negotiations between the social partners, ILO's juridical instruments in vocational training are worth mentioning[10]. Here, the emphasis is on the most recent items and points which pertain to the social partners. The following conventions on vocational training have been adopted since 1919:

- Convention (No 69) concerning the training certificate for ships' cooks (1946)

10 ILO's juridical instruments - List of conventions ratified on 31.12.1985 on the occasion of the 72nd session in 1986 of the International Labour Conference, Report III (Part 5) (ISBN 92-2-205173-4 and ISSN 0251-3218).

- Convention (No 74) concerning the training certificates for qualified sailors (1946)
- Convention (No 122) concerning employment policy (1964)
- Convention (No 125) concerning training certificates for fishermen (1966)
- Convention (No 140) and Recommendation (No 148) concerning paid educational leave (1974)
- Convention (No 142) and Recommendation (No 150) concerning guidance and vocational training in the development of human resources (1975).

In addition, the following resolutions and conclusions should be mentioned:

1. Resolution on training passed on 23 June 1981 by the ILO General Conference:

   - Here, it is recommended that the Member States:

     a) promote equal opportunities in training,
     b) provide training opportunities in line with structural changes,
     c) improve the efficacy of guidance and training programmes.

   - Furthermore, the Member States are invited:

     a) to set up machinery for evaluating workforce and qualification requirements;

b) to supply the necessary resources to the public training bodies;
c) to promote the **participation of the social partners** in identifying guidance and vocational training needs, in formulating training policies and in elaborating, managing and evaluating training programmes.

- The social partners are invited to cooperate in consultations or negotiations (including collective agreements).
- ILO is asked to undertake research on future training needs.

2. The resolution of June 1981 concerning the initial and continuing training of senior executives in businesses:

- The Member States are invited in particular:

a) to encourage the access of senior executives and heads of enterprises to training in managerial skills;
b) to accord, in this respect, particular attention to small and medium-sized enterprises;
c) to include work problems in training programmes.

- The ILO Director General is invited:

  a) to encourage policies likely to promote a spirit of enterprise and the acquisition of managerial know-how;
  b) to reinforce national and regional institutions of business management.

3. In 1986, the Youth Committee elaborated "conclusions" on the **training and employment of young people**. These conclusions, which were submitted to ILO, are to serve as a guide for the future policies of this Organization.

## Section 3 - Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that at ILO level, the only time a real dialogue on vocational training took place between the social partners up to now was in 1983 in the Metal Trades Committee (see page 90). But of course, training is a diffuse subject which crops up in many ILO discussions, especially in connection with employment policies.

Chapter 3

## THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

1. The activities of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg mainly concern the government representatives of Council Member States. However, it is sometimes the case that the social partners are given an opportunity to air their views during meetings prior to the Council sessions.

2. This is primarily the case when the annual work programme for the forthcoming year is to be discussed. Two delegations, one from the European Trade Union Confederation and one from UNICE, participate in the discussions on this programme and are invited to indicate the activities they consider important. The centres of interest of the two partners are, of course, quite different. There is no coordination between them on this occasion.

3. Secondly, mention should be made of the Conferences of European Ministers of Labour during which the key role of vocational training may be stressed. These conferences are traditionally **preceded** by **separate** meetings with UNICE and with the European Trade Union Conference. This was the case during the second

Conference of the Ministers in Paris in 1983 and during the third Conference in Madrid in 1986[11].

During the Paris Conference, attention focused on finding the best possible combination of economic and social policies. The desire was expressed for these deliberations to be undertaken "in as wide a forum as possible of consultations with the social partners".

More specially, the problems of training for young people and the constant retraining of workers were also examined.

During the Madrid Conference in 1986, the promotion of training was advocated in view of the existing imbalances in the supply and demand of employment.

In the more special area of youth unemployment, the emphasis was on education, alternance training, occupational "polyvalency", the training of future employers...

4. The "**European Social Charter**" is worth mentioning because it contains general principles of social

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11 Council of Europe
- Second Conference of the European Ministers of Labour on Employment - Paris, 3-5 May 1983. Final communiqué (MTV-2(83)7).
- Third Conference of the European Ministers of Labour - Madrid, 20-22 January 1986. Final communiqué (MTV-3(86)15).

policy. As far as its application is concerned, the European Trade Union Confederation has, on numerous occasions, expressed an opinion but UNICE only seems to have followed its fortunes from afar.

5. In conclusion, it seems that the influence of the social partners on the work of the Council of Europe is very limited and no cooperation at all has developed there between them.

## Chapter 4

## UNION OF INDUSTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (UNICE) AND THE EMPLOYERS' LIAISON COMMITTEE (ELC)

### Section 1 - General

Since 1959 UNICE has been the representative of private employers vis-à-vis Community institutions[12]. Immediately after its establishment, UNICE set up a social committee from which is derived a working group on vocational training. This group has been involved in "sinusoidal" activity during its long life. Above all, it has enabled those responsible for vocational training in the national federation members of UNICE to meet in order to exchange information, to reflect together on the main topical issues, and to prepare opinions destined for the Commission of the European Communities and, more particularly, for the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (see Part I, Chapter 2).

The activities of this working group are, therefore, considered to be positive: it is a crossroads for

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[12] UNICE
- Statutes of 1.4.1959 establishing UNICE.
- Draft statutes replacing the former ones (Doc. of 1.10.1986 - 22/10/1).

reflection and it has been able to indicate clearly the viewpoints of employers.

One of the major successes of the working group was the organization in The Hague in 1969 of a three-day colloquium on vocational training which brought together around **200** people mainly from businesses who were responsible for vocational training. Brilliant though it was, it remains the only example of its kind in the history of UNICE. At present, the working group has just held two meetings: one with Commission civil servants and the other for the purpose of preparing a UNICE statement on vocational training (October 1986).

## Section 2 - Contacts with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

1. In 1967, UNICE and ETUC decided to pool their thoughts in three social areas: the Social Fund, the free movement of workers and vocational training. Three joint groups were set up which met over the course of roughly one year. In the case of the first two subjects, the discussions did not bear any fruit, but the same cannot be said of the third: training. In this group, similar opinions and interests became evident and the members (employers and employees) of this group drew up a very substantial draft statement. However, at the very last moment, one of the

delegations prevented this statement from seeing the light of day.

It should be stressed that these efforts, although fruitless, are unique and illustrate the willingness of the social partners to come together and defend their common interests. This endeavour was very much appreciated by the Commission of the European Communities. Unfortunately, there was no follow-up to it in this form.

2. More recently, between 1983 and 1985, UNICE and ETUC began a dialogue which was a precursor to the current "social dialogue" of Val Duchesse. This time, the contacts were no longer organized according to the subject to be discussed. One joint group made up of 4 trade union representatives and 4 employers' representatives met on several occasions. One major topic figured on the agenda: employment and the economic crisis. Each of the parties expressed its standpoint on the major problems of the day. Of course, in addition to economic aspects (growth, investment, ...) all aspects of unemployment were examined, including training.

At the end of this work, the viewpoints of the two groups had been clarified and were well known to the European Commission, as one of its representatives had been involved in this work.

Written summaries on the main issues were prepared by both sides and a **joint text** of a very general nature was elaborated.

3. Since 1985, this work has been replaced, under the aegis of the Commission, by the **social dialogue of Val Duchesse**. Delegations of those responsible for economic and social policies meet regularly. It is too early to judge their work.

On the subject of "training and motivation", the debates have proved to be positive. The social partners tackled this from the angle of "essential changes in qualifications, rearrangement of work teams, changes in control functions, and the abolition of simple and automated execution tasks".

At the heart of the debate was the problem "At what level should training be given? What role is incumbent on the parties present?"

a) In the "micro-economic" working group, a joint draft statement of intent was drawn up between UNICE, ETUC and CEEP (European Centre of Public Enterprises) on the subject "new technologies and the social dialogue". This draft concerns training and motivating workers towards new technologies. The ten points of convergence reached are as follows:

1. Improved training and increased motivation will make new technologies more effective and more socially acceptable.

2. Increased job motivation means a real investment "to the same extent as capital investments and work".

3. Increased awareness and suitable training must help to bring about understanding of the potential in structural change. This will make it easier to control the impact on employment, on qualification levels...

4. Vocational training must cover initial training, continuing training and retraining (access to another enterprise). It must meet the needs of workers, enterprises, the economy and the large domestic market.

5. Responsibility for providing training:

   - Initial training is the responsibility of the public authorities with whom the social partners should be associated. The latter should help to ease the transition from school to working life.

   - Continuing training is the responsibility of the enterprise, workers being consulted on training programmes.

- Retraining is also the responsibility of the enterprise. It would be advisable here to look for "a better distribution of the financial burden between employers and vocational training bodies".

6. Continuing training and retraining must be viewed in the context of a **forward-looking labour market policy** (better understanding/grasp of future developments in employment). There must be support for the Commission's programme of pilot projects.

7. Special action must be taken in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises.

8. Special attention must be paid to people without any qualifications.

9. It would be advisable to develop at EC level pilot projects and exchanges of information on national experiments.

10. A relaxing of the regulations of the Social Fund would enable the training of experts representing both the workers and employers with regard to technological innovations.

If the project described above is adopted by the social partners, this will constitute an important step towards convergence.

b) The "macro-economic" group presented on 6 November 1986 a "joint opinion on a strategy of cooperation for growth and employment".

One of the points on which full agreement was reached was: "the improvement in the qualifications of the workforce and vocational retraining are the main elements which would develop employment and the competitiveness of the European economy. The costs of training have an investment value. Workers at all levels must be encouraged to attend courses of training".

## Section 3 - The Employers' Liaison Committee (ELC)

At the beginning of the 1970s, UNICE, the Committee of Commercial Organizations of the EC (COCCEE), and the Union of Craft Industries and Trades of the EC (UACEE) created an "Employers' Liaison Committee" to represent, vis-à-vis European bodies, the entire employers' group in the private sector.

This Committee has taken a stance in their name but it has not played any special role other than that similar to UNICE in the field of vocational training.

Each of the organizations quoted above has its representative on the CEDEFOP Management Board who defends the interests of his organization or better those of the entire employers' group.

For the rest, it should be noted that in recent years, the importance of the role of the Employers' Liaison Committee has seriously declined.

# Part III

# IN THE SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY

## Chapter 1

## OVERALL PICTURE

In Part III, the role of the social partners in vocational training has been examined in the different sectors of the economy. In the following chapters, an analysis is made of what is happening in agriculture, the metal sector, construction and services (insurance and banking). Little contact has been made to date beyond the sectors listed above which were selected for Project 1226. Two exceptions are worth mentioning, however:

1. The Joint Committee for the Fishing Industry: through this Committee, the European Commission grants subsidies for training schemes for fishermen. In 1986 the budget amounted to ECU 250 000. This aid was given to fishermen's institutes who used it mainly to develop the following schemes which are seen as very positive:

   - elaboration of training models to be applied on a general basis. These were elaborated in collaboration with the trainers from this sector, in particular during the Wépion seminar organized by the Commission in 1985;

- exchanges of workers;
- buses equipped with new technological equipment moving from port to port. The subsidies meant that this action could be extended to other countries.

2. In commerce: first contacts between the social partners took place in Directorate-General V. The partners are: for the employers the Liaison Committee for European Retail Trade Associations (CLD) and the European Committee for the Retail Trade (CECD), and for the employees' the commerce branch of EUROFIET (European Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees).

   A working group for training in the retail trade is to be set up early in 1987. Preparatory meetings for this new group have been held; their object was to decide which subjects should be studied first.

# Chapter 2

# IN AGRICULTURE

## Section 1 - Origins

In the agricultural sector, cooperation between the social partners in the training field is quite remarkable and probably unique. Thanks to the dynamism of this sector and to the financial support from the Commission of the European Communities, the development of training has been undertaken for 14 years now by the "European Training and Promotion Centre for Farming and Rural Life" (CEPFAR)[13].

In 1972, the need for such a body was felt in the face of various factors, of which several are peculiar to agriculture. These are mainly:

- the need to understand the new conditions deriving from the Common Agriculture Policy and to undertake the implied restructurings;
- the decline in the agricultural population;
- the clear understanding of the fact that vocational training is an essential feature of competition;
- the growing complexity and considerable cost of agricultural machinery;

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[13] European Training and Promotion Centre for Farming and Rural Life (CEPFAR). CEPFAR Statutes of 15.9.1975 (EC(75)16 rev/2).

- the influence of numerous parity-based agricultural committees and, in particular, the planned committee for social problems in agriculture (in 1968 a "European agreement on working hours" (45 hours) came into force under the aegis of the Commission. This was a forerunner of the European collective agreements.

## Section 2 - Structures

"A forum for informal exchanges and meetings", CEPFAR has several **components** (in fact all the social partners):

- COPA (Committee of Professional Agricultural Organizations in the European Community), which includes the "European Committee of Female Farmers". This Committee brings together independent farmers (the majority) **and** those who employ labour.
- EFA (European Federation of Agricultural Workers' Unions within the Community)
- COGECA (General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the EC) (Cooperatives)
- CEJA (European Council of Young Farmers in the EC).

CEPFAR has its own structures (Presidency, General Council, Executive Committee, Secretariat General, ...) and its seat in Brussels.

Thus, it has all the instruments it needs and is truly representative. This has enabled it to initiate a real

dialogue on training between all agricultural and rural development interests. How did it manage this? In other words, what **action** did it take?

## Section 3 - Activities

These are essentially five:

1. Seminars: CEPFAR organizes on average between six and seven seminars a year, the results of which are often published in the form of studies (see point 2). This means, over a period of 14 years, 17 500 days of training. The object of these seminars is vocational training (in liaison for example with the activities of the Social Fund, EAGGF (European Agricultural Guidance and Gurantee Fund...) but sometimes a seminar goes beyond the boundaries of training: development of structures, marketing of agricultural products... Training programmes and plans of action are derived from these topics.

   The follow-up to these seminars is twofold:

   a) impact at national level: the principles established at Community level must be carried over to the Member States;
   b) establishment of contacts between 22 regions with CEPFAR as the go-between (for example on the

application of rules applying to young people, to women).

Let us quote by way of illustration some recent seminars:

- adaptation of vocational training to the needs of modern European agriculture (Dijon 1985);
- training of heads of organizations of salaried agricultural workers (Schmitten 1981);
- employment and vocational training of agricultural workers (Herrsching 1977).

2. Studies: as indicated above, these are linked to seminars and are preceded by questionnaires. They are generally subdivided into chapters by country and usually adopt the classic pattern: analysis + deliberation + action. Here are two studies which have been carried out by CEDEFOP:

- one on the "comparability of qualifications in agriculture"
- the other on "training levels".

Besides, a study has been carried out for the Commission of the European Communities on "vocational training in the rural milieu".

3. Action undertaken with the Commission of the European Communities: there have been moves to make known training programmes in security and hygiene at work. To this end, CEPFAR has:

   - put together scientific material,
   - brought together at Community level agricultural training bodies.

   This has led to a programme of **training for trainers**. Other analogous schemes are envisaged in the following areas:

   a) utilization of agricultural machinery,
   b) security and hygiene in buildings,
   c) security and hygiene of plant protection products,
   d) organization of **study trips** for groups,
   e) **European vocational passport**: this would provide information on the occupational profiles of workers by giving a clear picture of knowledge and skills acquired in the course of training.

## Section 4 - Financing CEPFAR

The funds are provided primarily by the European Communities (Commission and Council of Ministers). Moreover, the member organizations also contribute towards certain costs.

CEPFAR brings together, as already stressed, all the social partners. For that reason, it has been given Community funds in the form of an agreed annual subsidy.

An agreement has been reached between CEPFAR and the Commission which guarantees a minimum in absolute figures (at present ECU 250 000).

The European member organizations of CEPFAR support it, not through contributions but through services rendered by the national and European organizations.

## Section 5 - Assessment

CEPFAR brings together the social partners who are aware of their conflicting interests. This is normal even if the purpose of CEPFAR is not negotiations. Joint discussions are not held at this level: CEPFAR is a forum for the exchange of information, a pivot.

All the same, it still plays an important role at EC level in promoting the spread of training in the agricultural sector. Of course, the need for CEPFAR was a direct consequence of the very character, the special nature of the Common Agricultural Policy. With different resources, it is possible to conceive of far reaching activities of another kind, for example the direct provision of vocational training.

We have seen that CEPFAR is quite unique and that its activities must be regarded positively. However, if it is to exert greater influence on the elaboration of vocational training policies at EC level, it must be given increased financial backing.

It is true to say that up to now the economic sectors have not undertaken any permanent action in this respect. Apart from contacts with CEDEFOP, there are scarcely any links between EC bodies and sectors organized as such in the field of training.

CEPFAR has expressed a wish for the creation of sectoral centres, possibly coordinated by CEDEFOP. This would enable the economic sectors, which so far have not taken any permanent action, to assume responsibility for and participate in training. A real need is felt for a **permanent** exchange of teaching tools for the trainig of trainers in the future.

Further wishes have also been expressed by CEPFAR representatives:

a) more extensive cooperation in the field of training at EC level is not enough: ways must be found of passing these policies on to national sectoral levels

b) communication and information tools must be developed urgently. Present contacts are difficult and costly (for example telephone and airplane), in particular for

the less affluent vocational training organizations. The new information system "Delta" constitutes a step in the right direction. An extension of systems of this kind would be very welcome.

# Chapter 3

# IN METAL INDUSTRIES

Up to now, this sector has developed few contacts at international level as far as training is concerned. It seems unlikely that they will increase in the near future.

## Section 1 - ORGALIME

In Western Europe, two professional organizations represent the metal trades sector on the employer side. The first is **ORGALIME** (Liaison Group for the European Engineering Industries). Although some members of ORGALIME carry out training activities, ORGALIME itself does not.

## Section 2 - The Western European Metal Trade Employers' Organization (WEM)

The other association, with a social character, is **WEM** (Western European Metal Trade Employers' Organization). This body has never carried on a dialogue at Community level with employees' representatives in the field of vocational training. However, it does have a working group for "vocational training".

The sole exchanges as far as training is concerned have taken place in the different and larger context of ILO. These very sporadic activities are described below.

## Section 3 - At the level of the International Labour Organization (ILO)

A. ILO convenes, at intervals of between 5 and 8 years, the **Industrial Committees** set up in 1963. One of them caters for the metal trade sector. These committees are tripartite. Governments and the social partners are represented by two members per country. Their activities are twofold and take in:

- ILO work,
- the social policies of ILO Member States.

According to the statutes of these committees (8 March 1963), they must succeed in promoting a "free and frank examination of common problems at international level", by bringing together "practitioners" from the different sectors. These committees draft the conclusions, the aim of which is to influence national social policies. Their objective is to promote the development of social policies in different countries.

B. The **Engineering Trades Committee**[14] met between 20 and 29 September 1983. Two kinds of questions figured on the agenda at this meeting. Besides studying the working and living conditions, attention also focused on the **"training and retraining of male and female workers**

[14] The Engineering Trades Committee, 11th session in September 1983. Memo on work (IC/MT/11/17).

**in engineering trades with special reference to technological change".**

The sub-committee responsible for this study prepared a report and conclusions which were adopted **unanimously**, and this should be stressed. In order to assess the scale of this agreement, it is imperative to understand the essence of the **conclusions** (No 90) summarized below.

After analyzing the recent development in production methods, qualifications and new training needs, in particular the influence of new technologies, the conclusions cover, in summarized form, the following points:

1) The effects on **initial** training: this should take in both good general instruction and induction in basic engineering procedures. Training for workers must be planned on a broad basis and provided both in institutions and at work.

   Supervisory staff must be initiated into new technical procedures. Senior technicians must move beyond knowledge of traditional engineering procedures by familiarizing themselves, for example, with the impact of computer-aided equipment in the planning and manufacture of products.

In conclusion, "taking into account technological developments, it is necessary to review existing training standards and to increase the scope of the vocational qualifications of the workers concerned".

2) The effects of **further training**: the further training and retraining systems have to be extended and there must be a more precise definition of their objectives.

Qualifications must keep pace with rapid technical progress. They must take in manual aspects, and the understanding of new technical procedures, including aspects of security and hygiene.

Executives and technicians must continually be given the opportunity to update their knowledge.

In view of the foregoing, "plans aiming to introduce new technologies should take account of the resulting training and retraining requirements". In the case of off-the-job training, the formula "paid educational leave" is advocated.

3) **Female workers in engineering industries**: in its conclusions the Committee calls for a strengthening of the legislation on equal treatment and for its enforcement.

In order to encourage female employment in this sector, especially at senior level, the Committee recommends the following measures aiming:

- to improve the image of engineering industries with women,
- to ease the access of young women to vocational training in this sector,
- to offer special facilities to female workers who want to obtain qualificaticns,
- to increase the percentage of female trainers.

4) **The need to change training systems**: if initial training is seen as satisfactory in industrialized countries, the same does not apply to further training systems. All too often, these are conceived on an ad hoc basis and are of an overly experimental and empirical character.

There must be better definition of objectives, more secure financing, closer links between these systems and initial training and, finally, new training standards.

In this connection, the following criteria should be taken into account:

- initial training can only be a first step in a permanent system,

- consideration must be given to regional differences and to the diverse needs of industrial engineering sectors,
- training must provide access to a wide spectrum of job opportunities,
- workers in teams must have access to training.

If individual firms are unable to provide a complete course of training, there must be provision for group training schemes.

Finally, the conclusions emphasize the need "to develop the ability to solve problems, to devise, to think and to act in an independent fashion".

5) **The role of governments, employers and workers:** each of the parties involved in training has its own role to play. Here, national traditions and legislation must be respected. The Committee's conclusions do, however, contain the following general **principles:**

a) The **governments** should:

- provide the legal framework and supply the necessary financial support,
- supply the facilities and modern training equipment,
- organize the cooperation between education and enterprises,
- assist disadvantaged groups.

b) The **employers** should:
   - supply practical training,
   - adapt training programmes to real needs.

c) The **workers** should:
   - ensure that training is adequate,
   - inform and send experts to assist in training procedures,
   - control the implementation of programmes.

As can be seen, the subject of the consensus reached in September 1983 between the three member groups of the Engineering Trades Committee of ILO is of real importance. If there are not many such examples, then that in itself is significant.

## Section 4 - Evaluation

Generally, the conclusion has to be that contacts between the social partners in the metal trade sector are under-developed at international level. Only the activities of ILO are worth mentioning. Significant as they are, they are nevertheless irregular and are bound by the precise limits imposed by ILO structures and procedures.

Finally, it must be understood that at EC level, no analogous contacts have been established. In the present climate, there is no indication of calls for this situation to change.

# Chapter 4

# IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

## Section 1 - General

The International European Construction Federation (FIEC) brings together 18 Western European countries. It is responsible for vocational training and has set up a committee for this specific purpose. Here, cooperation amongst social partners at international level is one of the most developed in the sectors of the economy under study.

The main activities of the Committee for vocational training which have led to the creation of several working groups are:

- a statement on youth unemployment (1985);
- current work, on the one hand, on the training of trainers and, on the other, on training of entrepreneurs;
- a working group to study the impact of independent work on vocational training;
- a new study of initial and subsequent training;
- the creation of a data bank (see below).

## Section 2 - Consultative Committee

This Committee was created under the aegis of the Commission of the European Communities (Directorate-General for Education, Employment and Social Affairs). It brings together the social partners from this sector, i.e. on the employer side the International European Construction Federation, and on the trade union side, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the European Federation of Building and Wood Workers.

This Committee is not-parity based; it only deals with training for **workers**. Since it started, it has held a dozen meetings (the last at the beginning of 1985). Its task is to research priority training problems at EC level.

On the employer side, contacts with the trade unions are seen as excellent. On both sides, the different representatives know each other well and also meet in other surroundings.

Beyond the work of CEDEFOP which is discussed in Section 3, the Consultative Committee has examined the creation of a **central data bank** with a constant updating system. It has examined the form this bank could take and what common concepts could form the basis. The aim is to **compare developments**, and to identify similarities and areas of common interest in training systems. A certain degree of harmonization would mean that a course could be steered towards common objectives.

To this end, the Committee has elaborated five successive projects which have fallen victim to clashes and misfortunes. The fifth project intends to call on the assistance of national counterparts who come from the different **construction training funds**. These projects have still to be concluded. In the meantime, we should look at what has been done in this context at other levels.

## Section 3 - At CEDEFOP level

A working group set up for this purpose by CEDEFOP has conducted two comparative studies of training systems (before the entry of Spain and Portugal, and excluding Greece).

The second study lasted four years and was concluded at the end of 1981. The aim was to approximate training levels for 12 construction occupations.

There was a need to ascertain both the interest in and the limits to this work.

FIEC does not think it very useful for two reasons:

1. The 12 (of 60) occupations are very heterogeneous.

2. The conclusions can only be exact at the very moment they are drawn. The study has quickly become outdated because developments have been very rapid.

Now, CEDEFOP has set up an **intersectoral data bank**. The national contacts for this bank are government officials or officials from employment bodies.

As such and because of its sectoral character, this work is only of minor interest to the construction sector. But FIEC has attached importance to having a well defined "drawer" of a general nature in this bank. The discussions between CEDEFOP and FIEC are heading in this direction and a draft contract - rather ambitious - has been drawn up. This contract will cover a period of three years and has been earmarked funds amounting to ECU 375 000. The financing would be divided between the social partners and CEDEFOP (the latter would bear the larger share of costs; this financial burden seems, however, to be causing some hesitancy).

The Vocational Training Committee was to examine this proposal but has not as yet taken a decision (November 1986).

## Section 4 - The Commission of the European Communities

Besides the role played by the Commission in the Consultative Committee described in Section 2, it has to be added that Directorate-General V has just commissioned a Belgium research bureau to undertake a study of training needs in the construction sector in EC Member States.

As a consequence of the situation described in Sections 2, 3 and 4, there has been a rapid increase in initiatives, efforts have to a certain extent been scattered and there is now evidence of real hesitancy.

Employer circles in the construction sector cannot conceal a certain disappointment. They have stressed to DG V the need to rationalize this work and to encourage better coordination and better communication between the European Commission, CEDEFOP and the social partners.

They all claim to be very interested in a sectoral data bank, seeing this as a priority objective. But they would like to see more clarity and more efficacy...

## Section 5 - Other FIEC activities

FIEC's Vocational Training Committee meets twice yearly. Every year, like the other FIEC committees, it presents a report to FIEC's general assembly. Its main preoccupation is the data bank for construction mentioned above. What are its other centres of interest?

a) **Spring** meeting: during this first meeting, information is exchanged on the basis of the activities of the working groups which examine special matters. It is the notion of "cross fertilization" which is at play here. Here, by way of example, are some of the subjects which have been studied:

- Training of entrepreneurs and, more particularly, those who have a workforce of under 20 persons. What are their attitudes to new technologies? What degree of liberalism is desirable when setting up a new business?
- (Job) security in training
- Continuing training
- Competences and responsibilities in the construction industry (entrepreneurs and their organizations) in the recruitment of human resources. In September 1986, the study on this subject led to a resolution, the text of which is significant:

> "The construction industry must maintain a skilled workforce in order to meet demand. In order to do so, it must be capable of attracting highly qualified individuals of all levels, particularly by means of a suitable salary for a first job. It must be able to train people, both in the interests of the enterprises and of the workforce, in such a way that the customer is assured of getting better quality thanks to the perfect quality of the work undertaken."

In fact, demand in the construction sector is undergoing profound and constant changes, irrespective of whether we are dealing with the construction of factories or private dwellings. This new demand obviously has far-reaching

repurcussions on the need for new vocational qualifications.

- new dynamism vis-à-vis the market and flexibility; future paths.

These subjects are studied in depth by interested parties who draw on comparisons, syntheses and future prospects...

b) The **autumn** meeting takes place once a year in a training centre in a different country. The national delegation in the host country describes its training system. This description is followed by a visit to a centre, which provides a concrete picture of the methods used.

The **Steering Committee** of the Vocational Training Committee meets four or five times a year. It organizes the Committee's meetings, provides stimuli for the working groups, and directs their work... The Vice-Chairman of the Committee reports back to it on the development of vocational training policy at EC level.

c) **Construction training funds:** on 25 and 26 September 1986 in Utrecht, the Construction Training Fund of the Netherlands extended an invitation to representatives of the equivalent funds from other countries on the

occasion of its 40th birthday. These funds are known to be parity-based and have been in existence for a very long time in all Member States.

Beyond the academic aspect, very fruitful exchanges have taken place between participants. In order to intensify these exchanges, the Assembly has passed a resolution whereby it hopes to repeat, if possible, this experience every year. Is it feasible that CEDEFOP could provide financial support for such a venture?

## Section 6 - Hopes and Prospects

We have emphasized that FIEC regards the creation of a permanent data bank as a priority task. This corresponds, moreover, to the wishes of Community bodies.

Besides this, the social partners would like to exchange views on more fundamental questions, but up to now have had no opportunity to do so. What are these areas?

Three years ago, FIEC (and trade union organizations, too) would have welcomed an opportunity to express in greater detail their views on the two EC resolutions on the following subjects:

- vocational training in the face of new technologies;
- extension of compulsory education, alternance training and the social guarantee:

  . in the case of **alternance** training, there is a gap between "school rigidities" and the flexibility demanded by the entrepreneur, above all in this sector. In order to overcome this difficulty, FIEC would like to supplement training (in the alternance form) **after** school. This **post**-school training would last between one and two years.

  . FIEC would, in principle, be in agreement with the concept of a **social guarantee**. But it would like to discuss the conditions...

Finally, another wish has been expressed by the Vocational Training Committee as a means of promoting the recognition and comparability of training qualifications. This would entail an exchange at European level of decision-makers (entrepreneurs or members of professional organizations), i.e. of people who in order to recruit staff, must be fully aware of what is exactly behind qualifications or titles (in other countries). More than the skilled workers, it is the decision-makers who have to know what is represented by any particular training designation. The problem of comparability must be solved in a satisfactory manner. If these exchanges take place at too high a level, they will bear little fruit. The suggested exchanges of decision-makers could be organized by FIEC.

# Chapter 5

# IN THE SERVICES SECTOR

## Section 1 - Insurance

It should be noted that all contacts between the social partners in this sector are **at national level**. There have been no contacts of this kind at international level.

On the employer side, there are, however, grounds for examining the activities of the European Insurance Committee (EIC) in Paris. There is no equivalent committee on the trade-union side.

The European Insurance Committee has 18 members. Thus, it goes far beyond EC boundaries. It is part of the Employers' Liaison Committee and, in this capacity, has been cooperating with UNICE for many years.

It has a "Common Market Committee" from which is derived a "Sub-Committee for Social Affairs". The powers of the latter extend to the EC. It follows Community policies, in particular employment policy. Here, it studies, of course, questions relevant to the insurance sector, usually by comparing national situations. However, it sometimes examines trade-union demands (for example in the field of flexibility, working hours, ...).

But its activities mainly involve exchanges of information. The Sub-Committee for Social Affairs is careful to avoid giving guidance or issuing directives.

Vocational training is examined in a wider forum than the EC. Six member associations of the European Insurance Committee are situated outside the EC.

The European Insurance Committee has, therefore, set up a **Vocational Training Committee** which became a permanent body in September 1981. It has no intention whatsoever of trying to harmonize vocational training standards or systems.

The Vocational Training Committee could, in the near future, look at the implications for training of the introduction of new technologies. This subject is evidently of major importance in the insurance sector.

However, no attitude or stance - either general or representative of the entire sector - will be adopted.

Finally, here are two important characteristics of the insurance sector in the EC:

1. The European Insurance Committe is directed at a workforce which includes both people with an employment contract, and insurance brokers. The concentration and number of the latter varies totally from country to country. In some states, the broker system has been

extensively developed. It should be emphasized that brokers are legally independent persons. They, therefore, elude any contacts between the social partners.

2. Whereas in some countries, such as the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland, in-company training is widespread, in others (Belgium, France, Spain and the United Kingdom) training is provided to a large extent by training centres set up and financed by insurance companies.

## Section 2 - Banking

Contrary to the situation in the insurance sector, banks do not have any professional organization to represent them in the social field at EC level. The Banking Federation of the EC (with economic powers) declines any responsibility for vocational training.

Banks (particularly large ones) are often reputed to have extensive training networks. But these are at enterprise level and do not exclude exchanges of training between banks of various countries on a **bilaterial level**. The social partners do not seem to play any role at all here.

This absence of structures has not prevented Directorate-General V from organizing meetings concerning, in the first instance, Mr E. Kirchner's report on the "social

consequences of the introduction of new technologies in the banking sector". On the same subject, a seminar was held in Luxembourg in November 1984. This work focused on training.

The International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET) and the Savings Banks Group of the EC and the Cooperative Banks Group of the EC were involved in this work. These organizations presented on 5 November 1984 joint comments on the Kirchner report. Moreover, the representatives of private banks took part in their capacity as private individuals in this work.

This work has been followed up in a working group which drafted a preliminary report on the development of employment in European banks. The desire has been expressed for future work of this kind to concentrate more on vocational training.

# SUMMARY AND PROSPECTS

## 1. Summary

With the exception of a few aspects such as shared responsibility (who does what?), the funding of training and the link between the contents of qualifications and occupations, employers and employees very often see their interests converge when it comes to training. And they are more or less aware of this. This is confirmed firstly at national and secondly at international level. In these areas, it is more a question of agreeing on principles, on guidelines, rather than on concrete training activities. The two parties share the same interests. The convergence of these interests is inherent. It remains to be seen whether this will lead to positive developments.

This study can be evaluated at three levels. The question which has been raised is very simple: Where and to what degree do the social partners cooperate? We have drawn a distinction between:

1. EC institutions. Their structures are generally unwieldy and national peculiarities flourish. The results of cooperation at this level are rather meagre with two major exceptions: the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training and CEDEFOP. In both cases, each of the two groups prepares itself well for the consultations. The two groups share major areas of

interest. And together they are able to influence both the Commission of the European Communities and CEDEFOP. However, both in the Advisory Committee and CEDEFOP, much progress has still to be made along the path to cooperation **between** the partners.

2. Outside the EC, the International Labour Organization has its own procedures. In recent years the social partners do not seem to have been involved very much in cooperation there in the field of training. One exception, however, has been analyzed in this study: the Metal Trades Committee in 1983. By contrast, in 1986 at OECD level, BIAC and TUAC presented an excellent joint statement on "full employment and growth, a social and economic goal". The prospects for future cooperation in the OECD are promising.

3. The situation varies considerably from one sector of the economy to another. At international level it ranges from the complete absence of any form of contact to extremely developed forms of cooperation. Of the three sectors covered by this study - construction, services and metalworking - only the first sector has experienced noteworthy cooperation and even here there is still room for improved relations between the social partners at the level of the EC Commission (DG V) and CEDEFOP. As for the rest, in agriculture CEPFAR offers a unique and long-established example of intensive collaboration amongst **all** the social partners, with direct EC assistance.

## 2. Prospects

Although training is a suitable meeting ground, it does come up against major obstacles which cannot, it appears, be overcome in the short term.

1. A first obstacle to cooperation is by nature intrinsic: the marked differences between training systems in EC Member States. Traditionally, each country is convinced of the superiority of its own structures. Employers, employees and the government representatives of a country are quick to reach agreement on this point.

2. The nature of the structures of several international institutions: ILO, Council of Europe, Standing Committee on Employment, the Committee of the Social Fund... makes them aware of their inherent unwieldiness. Sometimes, their mechanisms are quite simply jammed. Each of the social partners has the impression of being suffocated by them.

We should add that the employers in the construction sector are in favour of more extensive cooperation with the EC Commission and CEDEFOP.

How are we in future to convince the social partners of the need for more cooperation in the field of training? In a new technological era this challenge is important because

if no progress can be made in training, how can we hope for progress in other areas of Community social policy?

Two possible solutions can be advanced:

1. At institutional level developments are slow. Several reforms are at present being studied in the EC. We must hope that these will bring some improvement. Of course, everything really depends on the political willingness of both parties.

2. At sectoral level, there are grounds for optimism. Considerable successes have already been recorded in the construction and agriculture sectors. From these two vantage points, we must aim in two directions:

   - to consolidate and develop what has been achieved. The representatives of these two sectors have expressed a number of wishes and have indicated possible fields for the extension of activities;

   - to repeat the successes of these two sectors in others. This would be possible if we could overcome remaining but not overly deep-rooted apprehensions, and could clearly demonstrate the advantages enjoyed by the social partners in the above two sectors.

The path we have taken offers some glimmers of hope. All the same, substantial progress has still to be made and can

be made if the social partners manage to grasp that in vocational training, even if there is a minimum of risk, they have everything to gain through more intensive cooperation. The prospects of new technologies should be a strong incentive.

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## ANNEX

## LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES IN WHICH THE SOCIAL PARTNERS WORK TOGETHER

1.1 Standing Committee on Employment
Council of Ministers
Rue de la Loi, 170
1040 - Brussels

1.2 Advisory Committee on Vocational Training
Commission of the European Communities
Rue de la Loi, 200
1040 - Brussels

1.3 Consultative Committee to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)
Bâtiment Jean Monnet
Plateau de Kirchberg
BP 1907
Luxembourg

1.4 European Social Fund
Commission of the European Communities
(see above).

1.5 Economic and Social Committee
Rue Ravenstein, 2
1000 - Brussels

1.6 Tripartite Conferences
Council of Ministers
Rue de la Loi, 170
1040 - Brussels

1.7 European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)
Bundesallee 22
D - 1000 Berlin 15

2.1 Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Rue André Pascal, 2
F - 75775 Paris

2.1' Business and Industry Advisory Committee of OECD (BIAC)
Chaussée de la Muette, 13-15
F - 75016 Paris

2.2 International Labour Organization (ILO)
CH - 1211 Geneva 22

2.2' International Employers' Organization (IEO)
Chemin de Joinville, 28
CP 68
CH - 1216 Cointrin/Geneva

2.3 Council of Europe
BP 431 R6
F - 67006 Strasbourg

2.4 Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE) and the Employers' Liaison Committee (ELC)
Rue de Loxum, 6 (Bte 21)
1000 - Brussels

3.1 Joint Committee for the Fishing Industry
Commission of the European Communities
(see above)

3.1' Liaison Committe for European Retail Trade Associations (CLD-FIGED)
Avenue E. Lacomblé, 17
1040 - Brussels

3.1" European Committee for the Retail Trade (CECD)
Avenue de la Joyeuse Entrée, 11 (Bte 4)
1040 - Brussels

3.2 European Training and Promotion Centre for Farming and Rural Life (CEPFAR)
Rue de la Science, 25 (Bte 10)
1040 - Brussels

3.3 Liaison Group for European Engineering Industries (ORGALIME)
Rue de Stassart, 99
1050 - Brussels

3.3' Western European Metal Trade Employers' Organization (WEM)
Volksgartenstrasse, 54A
D - 5000 Cologne 1

3.4 International European Construction Federation (FIEC)
Rue La Pérouse, 9
F - 75116 Paris

3.5 European Insurance Committee (EIC)
Rue Meyerbeer, 3
F - 75009 Paris

3.5' Banking Federation of the European Community
Avenue de Tervueren, 168 (Bte 5)
1150 - Brussels

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CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

**Employers' organizations - their involvement in the development of a European vocational training policy**

**Study commissioned by CEDEFOP within the framework of the project 'The role of the social partners in vocational training'**

**Franz Castin**

*CEDEFOP Document*

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

1987 — 117 pp. — 21.0 × 29.7 cm

DE, EN, FR

ISBN 92-825-7201-3

Catalogue number: HX-48-87-387-EN-C

Price (excluding VAT) in Luxembourg:

ECU 5 BFR 200 IRL 3.60 UKL 3.50 USD 5

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Tel. (030) 88 41 20, Telex 184 163 eucen d, Telefax (030) 88 41 22 22

Price (excluding VAT) in Luxembourg
ECU 5 BFR 200 IRL 3.60 UKL 3.50 USD 5

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ISBN 92-825-7201-3

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